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PETS SPREAD DISEASE.

Many Cases of Scarlet Fever, Diphtheria and Other Maladies Traced to Cats.

A common cause of the widespread prevalence of infectious diseases has been traced to an unusual and unsuspected source. It has been found that cats and other household pets are responsible for the scattering of the microbes of contagious disease.

Household pets are in the habit of wandering out of doors, even when the most careful vigilance is kept over them. Cats and dogs especially are in the habit of taking nocturnal excursions to garbage-laden alleys and into the very central point of disease and contagion. They have a peculiar penchant for making daily calls at our neighbor's house, especially when encouraged to come for the sake of entertaining a sick child.

Cats, more particularly than dogs, on account of their domestic habits, have long been suspected of being a partial factor in conveying infection. Physicians and students have of late begun a series of investigations wherewith to prove their well-founded suspicions. And they have inaugurated a crusade against any sort of living thing in the way of a pet, to prevent their incursion and excursion where there is disease.

Careful investigation has proved that a great part of the diphtheria prevalent in the city and nearly all of the scarlet fever has been traced to cats. They not only are subject to the disease itself, but are also the means of a direct transference of microbes. But diphtheria and scarlet fever contagion has not been the sole extent of the evil. Several cases of smallpox have been reported by health officers in different parts of the country which have been brought about in the same way, that is, by a cat from an infected house bringing disease to the family of a neighbor. Another case is reported in Chicago of contagion where a rabbit was loaned as a plaything to a child with measles. Later the innocent dumb beast was sent back, carrying death in its very contact, through the thoughtlessness and ignorance of both families concerned. Innumerable cases of deadly typhus have been met with which have been induced by the same means. Yet people continue to wonder at the spread of disease, and in their criminal carelessness permit their household pets to wander about at liberty. Medical journals have been aroused, of course, by the reports of investigators, and by vigorous editorials and reports of specific cases are trying to warn the community at least against a terrible and newly unearthed evil. French publications have offered their assistance in the crusade. Considerable space was given to a peculiar case of a seamstress in Paris, who, in her solitude and loneliness, was in the habit of permitting her dog to lick her face. At one time her pet, who was a large St. Bernard, remained away a whole week from the protecting roof of his mistress. On his return her joy was so unbounded that she fondled him more than ever. Suddenly she was attacked with a severe inflammation of the right eye. The cause was unknown. Several oculists were visited and consulted, but the treatment in every case was unsuccessful. The right eye became a swollen, hideous mass, and the sight was totally destroyed. In the course of time, the inflammation began to spread to the left eye, and to prevent the certain fatal influence the other eye was cut out. Upon careful examination a hideous discovery was made. Within the member, back of the cornea, was found a tapeworm. This the dog had probably picked up while licking some diseased and foul object when away from home, and had transferred it on his return to his mistress' cheek.

Cats and dogs are known to be indiscriminate and careless in the choice of objects on which they exercise their tongues. Then, on account of their zeal in licking the hands and faces of their masters, great danger lies in the transmission of parasites. Contagion by this means is simple and easy, and it is marvelous that a greater amount of hideous parasitic disease has not been the result.—Chicago Times-Herald.

The "Jerks."

Do you remember of ever having heard of that remarkable physical disorder which accompanied a religious movement which swept over the United States just prior to the war of 1812? It was, in fact, a contagious nervous disease, which, for the want of better name, was called "the jerks." An early New England writer who saw several cases refers to this remarkable manifestation as follows: "The 'jerks' took their name from the fact that the whole body was affected, and that in a most singular fashion too. The arms and legs would be thrown about, apparently by a force beyond control of the affected individual. Sometimes the head would be thrown backward and forward with great violence. Occasionally the entire body would be affected, and in such cases the victim would fall upon the ground and flounce about like a fish out of water." The disorder soon became epidemic, frequently attacking a whole religious assemblage at one time, making no distinction between the impious and the pious. The only relief was to grasp something and hold fast until the fit passed off. The disease, if such it may be called, usually left its victims badly prostrated, and in more than one instance death ensued during the attack, usually from broken necks or violent concussions and contusions during the convulsion. The disorder lasted from about 1810 to 1818, and then gradually disappeared from the land.—St. Louis Republic.

DEAR lady fair, 'tis but my heart I
send to you this morn,
All battered, shattered, dented and
rent and sadly torn;
You've played with it for many a
day; most cruel sweetheart mine,
And now I send it back to you to be
your valentine.
Others may bring red roses and sing of Cupid's darts,
Of mating doves and dimpled loves or prate of bleeding hearts;
But I, I only send you this—'tis of myself a part;
What will you do with it, fair maid, this living, human heart?
Wilt wear it as the roses above your own dear heart?
'Twill glow and blossom if you will—your smile shall cure its smart.
You've tossed it back to me so oft, and yet 'twas half in play,
Ah! keep it now, for Cupid's self brings it to you to-day!
He's sworn to be my messenger, to lay it at thy feet,
To use his gentle offices to gain it shelter sweet;
And should he fail—then keep it still; I would not even grieve
Tho' it were silver-plated, dear, and worn upon thy sleeve.

—May Eldred Armstrong, in Chicago Post.

THE vicar of Whinfield was not popular with his parishioners. He was one of those men who, without meaning to be disagreeable, nevertheless make themselves disliked wherever they go. The real reason was that he was utterly devoid of tact. He seldom failed to say the wrong thing, especially when it was essential that he should say the right. If there was a chance of putting his foot into it, into it (as sure as eggs) his foot went. If he was obliged, in the exercise of his duties, to make an unpleasant remark, he was absolutely certain to say it in the most unpleasant way. These unfortunate proclivities were always displaying themselves.

There was another little point about him which increased his unpopularity—especially among the tradesmen of the place. He was "near" in the matter of money. He seemed to have a constitutional aversion to parting with it. Even when an account was due he invariably dallied in the discharging of the same; and though he always paid up in the end, he often kept shopmen waiting longer than they cared about. It was really a fad of his—a mere idiosyncrasy, and did not arise from any conscious churlishness. But the shopkeepers of Whinfield regraded it shopkeepers of Whinfield regarded it niggardly nature; and though they supplied the vicar, because it was worth their while, they nevertheless disliked him with all their commercial souls.

Whinfield was a small place of 1,500 inhabitants, something between a tiny town and an overgrown village. It had quite a fair number of shops—butcher, baker, fishmonger, grocer, linendraper, ironmonger, wine merchant and tobacconist. It was served by a doctor, eke by an auctioneer. But there was one important thing not to be had there—namely, law. No solicitor had yet found it worth his while to settle in so small a place.

But about the middle of October a year or two since a solicitor did, at length, make his appearance, and set up in Whinfield. His name was Perks. He was a shrewd, dapper, little man, of prepossessing exterior and insinuating ways, who soon made to himself friends in the village. Although his manner was bland and courteous, it was pretty obvious that he was not quite a gentleman. But as very few persons in Whinfield—except the squire and the vicar—had any pretensions to that distinction, the solicitor's lack of the pure "haut ton" was no barrier to his getting on. Perhaps, indeed, it rather helped him; since it was to the tradesmen and farmers that he would chiefly have to look for business; and they preferred a man with whom they could associate on a footing of equality.

This is just what Perks did. He constantly went to the tradesmen's houses. He dined and supped with them. He did the civil to their wives and daughters. He often dropped in casually in the afternoon for a cup of tea, or in the evening for a pipe and a glass of grog. This naturally made him popular in their circle.

"Mr. Perks is quite the gentleman," said Mrs. Grocer Hobb, "and there's no nasty pride about him, neither."

"True, Maria," asserted Hobb, her spouse, a fat and prosperous figure, "Perks is a good sort. And if I have a bit of lawyering to be done I'll put it in Perks' way."

For the first month or two after his arrival in Whinfield Perks was a regular attendant at the parish church. It was the proper, the respectable thing to do. Besides, to get in with the vicar—even when the vicar is unpopular—may pay a newcomer very well in a country parish.

But the vicar did not take to Perks at all. From the first he had shown a dislike to him, and nothing that the solicitor did to ingratiate himself in that quarter made any difference. At the best of times, and to his dearest friends, the vicar's manner was scarcely agreeable. Where he felt dislike it was positively forbidding. Perks put up with several snubs from him, "pour le bon motif." But at length, seeing the uselessness of such a course, he abandoned further attempts to win the vicar's friendship, and openly declared himself on the side of the reverend gentleman's enemies.

There was scarcely a tradesman in Whinfield who was not to be numbered in this category. From Grocer Hobb downwards every one of them had his grievance against the vicar. "Treats me like a dog, he does," said one. "Never calls to see me when I'm ill," said another. "Is always grumbling at my meat," said a third—the local butcher. And so forth. While in one common grievance against him all concurred—namely, his tiresome habit (already mentioned) of keeping them waiting for their little accounts. "'Tisn't as if he was hard up," was the unanimous complaint. "He has plenty of money. He simply does it to make himself disagreeable."

Of course, Perks heard these grumbles in his almost daily intercourse with the tradesmen of Whinfield. The solicitor—in spite of his bland exterior and insinuating ways—was not the man to forget a slight or to pardon a snub. He meant to give the vicar a Roland for his Oliver when he saw the chance, and it occurred to him, after some reflection, that he might, perhaps, see that chance in this aforesaid matter of the vicar's little accounts.

It was getting on into February and the vicar's Christmas bills still remained unsettled. Perks conceived a wish that the tradesmen to whom the bills were due would put them into his hands for collection. The wish strengthened into a longing, the longing into a fixed resolve. He began, by a gradual and insinuating process, to get the tradesmen in the mind to cooperate.

This was not such a very easy matter. For though the Whinfield shopkeepers growled at and disliked the vicar in no measured degree, still his custom was a consideration; and, glad as they would have been to do him a nasty turn, they nevertheless were not prepared to take a step which would drive him away altogether from their shops.

"WHAT'S ALL THIS ABOUT?"

Perks, however, was a smart man, and he managed, in the end, to engineer his scheme. He was—it may be added—providentially assisted in this matter by the vicar himself. Just at the right minute (from Perks' standpoint) the reverend gentleman had complained to Grocer Hobb about the quality of the bacon supplied him, and had, indeed, sent back half a side as unfit to eat.

Something of the same sort happened in reference to Shanks, the butcher. Shanks had a sirloin returned to him, on the ground of its being cow-beef. It was cow-beef. But Shanks had sold it for ox-beef, and he felt it an unwarrantable insult to have his word thus questioned.

Butcher Shanks was not logical; nor was Grocer Hobb. And each was led by his dislike for the vicar to believe that the vicar himself had purposely insulted him. Perks rejoiced to find them both in this mood. He struck while the iron was hot. He unfolded to them his pretty little scheme for giving the vicar beans. If they, and the other tradesmen in the place, to whom the vicar owed bills, would combine and hand him their accounts to collect, he would soon read his reverence a lesson. He would teach him to be careful how he insulted honest tradesmen.

Grocer Hobb and Butcher Shanks liked the idea of the vicar being taught that lesson. But they made it a "sine qua non" that if they did this thing the other creditors of the vicar in Whinfield should do likewise.

Perks undertook to see the other creditors, and, if possible, to secure their compliance. He saw them; he talked to them in his most insinuating way; he worked upon their unqualified hatred for the vicar. The end of it was that the solicitor was instructed to collect the seven largest accounts owed by the vicar in the place. They amounted jointly to about 200 pounds.

It was then the end of the first week in February, and Perks' intention was that the vicar should receive his agreeable communication on the morning of Valentine's day. Perks had a tolerable notion of effect; and he considered that the vicar would be doubly incensed if he received the dunning letter in the form of a valentine. He had not told his clients the exact strain in which he should write, nor the extreme peremptoriness of the demand he should make. But the letter which he posted to the vicar on Valentine's eve was as good a specimen of the sharp-practice solicitor's composition, when intentionally insolent, as could be well desired. The gist of it was that unless the whole amount due on these seven accounts were paid to him, Sidney Perks, by return of post, he should issue process against the vicar, without further notice or delay.

"There," said Perks to himself, triumphantly, as he sealed up the envelope. "I calculate this will just about give his reverence fits."

It did give his reverence fits. That is to say, it put him into a fine state of rage and excitement when he read it at breakfast next morning. His angry looks and savage frowns struck decided consternation into the breasts of the two other persons who were sharing that meal with him. These were his only daughter, Amy, and his nephew, Frank Miller, a young barrister, who frequently came down from town, when he was not very busy, to stay at the vicarage. The fact was, there had long existed a sort of attachment between the cousins, of which the vicar was unaware. It had not, however, developed into an express engagement until that very morning; when young Miller, coming down early and finding his cousin in the garden, had taken the opportunity—for which the day was so singularly appropriate—of declaring a passion which he could not any longer conceal.

Amy had answered his proposal with a blushing acceptance; stipulating, however, that Frank should inform her father of the circumstances immediately, and this he had, of course, agreed to. He did not, however, look forward to the interview with any great pleasure or confidence, for two sufficient reasons. In the first place, he knew that his uncle had a prejudice against first cousins marrying; in the next, his own worldly circumstances were not, at present, such as would commend themselves to a prospective father-in-law. He had, indeed, a little money of his own; and the vicar, being well off, might, if he chose, make his only daughter a good allowance. But whether he would do so, or would even countenance the engagement at all, was a decidedly doubtful matter; though Frank believed that if he could manage to catch his reverence in a good humor, he might be able to talk him round.

Frank's and Amy's dismay, therefore, when they saw that the vicar had been seriously put out of temper by his correspondence, can well be understood; more especially as he was a man who did not get over the effects of provocation at all quickly, and had a playful little way of venting his annoyance on all who came near him, whether concerned in the provocation or not. The worst of it was, Frank was bound to be back in London in five or six days at the least, and, of course, his interview with his uncle must take place before his departure.

After breakfast, his uncle called him into his study.

"Just read that, Frank," he said, handing him Sidney Perks' epistle.

"By Jove! What's all this about? Psha!—Impertinent ass!—Hilloa, Sidney Perks? Sidney Perks?" commented young Miller, as he glanced over the epistle.

"Do you happen to know the little cad, then?" inquired the vicar, in evident surprise. "He is a newcomer here; and no acquisition, either."

"I—I—don't suppose so," replied Frank. "I did come across a solicitor of the name about a year ago; but his practice was in town."

"A short, little man?" asked the vicar; "pitted with smallpox? Jewish face? Wears glasses—eh?"

"Ah, he is evidently not the same," answered Miller, decidedly. "My man was tall and gaunt, and not pitted with smallpox. But I tell you what it is, uncle. This fellow, from his letter, is evidently a sharp and shady practitioner of the nastiest type. He wants a lawyer to deal with him. Just you turn him over to me."

"I—I don't know," said the vicar, doubtfully. "Nothing can be done. I do owe the money of course. And I was going to pay these seven accounts this week. Still, to have the money demanded in such an impudent way is intolerable. I shall certainly leave all these tradesmen who have instructed Perks."

"I should. They deserve being made to sit up. But, in any case, it will be much more agreeable for you not to have to act in the matter personally. You leave it entirely in my hands."

This, after some demur, the vicar, at length, agreed to do; Frank persuading him that it would be far more dignified for him to have no personal communication whatever with Perks or with the tradesmen. And so the affair was placed, unreservedly, in the young barrister's hands.

The vicar rubbed his glasses and looked at the letter again. He felt that his eyes must have deceived him. But no. There the thing was in black and white, unmistakably clear and evident, and as the vicar read it a second time, he gave quite a gratified smile. But still he was puzzled.

The letter was as follows:

2 and 3 The Broadway, Feb. 18, 189—.

Reverend Sir: In thanking you for your most generous and honorable behavior, I take the opportunity of apologizing, with all my heart, for what has occurred in reference to my account. The truth is, reverend sir, that I was enticed by the deceiving arts of a cheat and swindler; and I need not say that I shall be only too pleased to cooperate in any steps that may be taken for his arrest and punishment.

Your grateful and obedient,
HEZEKIAH HOBB.

The vicar opened a second letter which had arrived by the same post. It was from Shanks, the butcher, and was even more effusively apologetic than Hobb's. It also referred to "your having acted so honorable and like the gentleman." The vicar looked still blander and more gratified, but still decidedly puzzled.

There were five other letters from local tradesmen, and all ran in much the same strain, not one of them omitting to eulogise him for his honorable conduct. Never in his life before had the reverend gentleman received seven such flattering communications. He did not, in the least, understand what they meant; but still they put him in an excellent humor. Honorable? Certainly, acting on his nephew's advice, he had given him checks for distribution among the seven tradesmen on the previous day; but, that was only a settlement—rather a tardy one into the bargain—of his just debts. There was nothing extraordinarily honorable in that. Still it is always nice to be acknowledged honorable, especially by your enemies. And when the vicar had finished reading the seventh letter he was in a very good temper indeed.

At that fortunate moment a knock came at his study door, and Frank entered. Seeing the expression on his uncle's face, and auguring therefrom the best results, he lost no time in making his momentous confession about Amy. The vicar exclaimed. He hummed and hawed. But he was in a heavenly temper; and he ended by giving his consent.

This is how Frank Miller had worked his little scheme. Sidney Perks was the solicitor whom he had come across in town; and, in certain dealings with him, Frank had learnt some facts about Perks, by communicating which to the proper authorities, he could have brought him to the bar of the Old Bailey. Perks had tried to obviate such a possibility by promptly clearing out of town. Curiously enough he had betaken himself to the very place of which Frank's uncle was vicar.

Armed with these irresistible arguments, Frank had, on the morning of Valentine's day, gone straight to Perks' office, and, under threat of setting the police on to him immediately, had made two demands, to which, after some useless demur, Perks was fain to consent.

The first demand was, that he should write out and hand over to Frank receipts for the seven accounts. The second, that he should leave Whinfield within 12 hours. Upon these conditions, he should be left to escape and lose himself, unmolested. Frank was inexorable, and Perks was not in a position to resist. So both demands were complied with.

Frank's next step, two days later, was to go round and see the tradesmen, informing them that the vicar had duly paid their accounts to Perks, and producing the receipts; he also advised them (in a friendly way) to look sharp after their money, as ugly rumors were current about Perks, and he was said to have bolted. * * * Those concerned lost no time in hurrying round to Perks' office, where he was not; and thence to his house, which (his servant told them) he had quitted hurriedly two days before. "Where had he gone?" "He hadn't left no address." Then, indeed, was bitter lamentation and outery heard among the swindled shopkeepers. Then it was that the vicar (all unknown to himself) had "acted so honorable and like a gentleman," by writing the checks for the seven accounts and handing them to Frank to distribute. This astute young man had left the tradesmen under the impression that, in order to save them from loss, his uncle had paid their accounts twice over; and had descanted, in rather strong terms, upon this truly Christian return of good for evil.

Frank did not acquaint his uncle with these little mysteries until he was just starting on his honeymoon. And as, by that time, the vicar had tasted the sweets of six months' popularity in the parish, and found it exceptionally agreeable, he saw no reason to forfeit it, at this late hour, by any useless disclosures.—London Truth.

A Natural Mistake.

"Oh, look!" exclaimed Ruth, a victim of the passing craze, "what lovely posters!" And she and Mabel went into the store and purchased several dollars' worth. Pray, how were they to know that the goods bought were not posters, but comic valentines?—Boston Transcript.

A LITTLE NONSENSE.

—"What is wit?" asked Lord Chatham. "A good thing well applied, just as if you gave me the living of ——," replied a sound divine.

—A man recently drank a pint of yeast in mistake for a pint of buttermilk. He rose three hours earlier than usual next morning.—Tit-Bits.

—The Husband (during the quarrel)—"You're always making bargains. Was there ever a time when you didn't?" The Wife—"Yes, sir; on my wedding day."—Tit-Bits.

—Stage News.—"Did you know that Henry Irving had sprained one of his knees?" "Yes; now he will have to make gestures with his arms."—Chicago Record.

—"Prisoner at the bar," said his lordship, solemnly, having donned the black cap, "you will shortly have to appear before another, and—perhaps—a better judge."—Household Words.

—"Do you mean to say that your daughter hasn't told you that she was engaged to me?" "No. I told her not to bother me with those affairs unless she intended to get married."—Life.

—Another View.—"Don't you think it would encourage men if they could read their obituaries while they are alive?" "No; they would get so conceited that we couldn't live with them."—Chicago Record.

—"He's a very interesting young man," remarked the elderly gentleman; "very pushing and alert. He belongs to the rising generation." "I shouldn't have dreamed it," replied Miss Cayenne. "Indeed?" "No. From his manners I should not have hesitated about concluding that the rising generation belonged to him."—Washington Star.

—The boy whose business it was to answer the telephone rushed into the room of the senior. "Just got a message saying that your house was on fire," he said. "Dear me!" returned the senior partner in a bewildered sort of way. "I knew my wife was pretty hot about something when I left home this morning, but I didn't think it was so bad as all that."—Chicago Post.

—Gadwell—"Do you see much difference in Deville since his conversion?" Fitton—"Oh, yes; a great difference. When he kicks out a tenant now he tells him how sorry he is to be obliged to disturb him; he used to be quite rough in his manner." Gadwell—"But he kicks him out just the same, I suppose?" Fitton—"Of course; you can't expect a man to carry his religion so far as to let it interfere with his business."—Boston Transcript

DENSITY OF POPULATION.

The Most Thickly Peopled Spot in the World Is in New York City.

As a whole, the city of New York below the Harlem river (the island of Manhattan) is more densely peopled than any other city in the world, counting 143.2 persons to the acre, while Paris counts 125.2. Then one-sixth of the entire population of all New York (reckoning now with the parts above the Harlem too) is concentrated upon 711 acres of ground. Here, on the lower east side of our town, in the summer of 1894, there dwelt some 324,000 souls, averaging 476.6 to the acre; and a certain section of this great area—the Tenth ward—showed a local acre-average of 626.26. The most thickly-peopled spot in Europe is the Jew quarter in Prague; but it is only one-fifth as large as our Tenth ward, while it shows a density scarcely greater than that of the whole of the 711 acres in which the Tenth ward is contained—485.4 per acre. Nor is this the worst that our 711 acres can reveal. Sanitary district A of the Eleventh ward (bounded by Avenue B and Second street, Columbia, Rivington and Clinton streets) contains 32 acres, and in the summer of 1894 each of them bore 986.4 human beings. This is the very thickest, blackest coagulation of humanity in all the known world. No European place of anything like the same size even approaches it, and its nearest rival is a part of Bombay where the average population over an area of 46.06 acres is 739.66.

Yet it should be remembered that, while our acres are thus more heavily burdened than any others, places can be found in European, as in Asiatic, towns where people are more uncomfortably crowded within doors. There the houses are low. But New York tenements are very lofty, and thus our floor-space to the acre is much more extensive. Moreover, although we are now more crowded than ever before, our sanitary state steadily improves. During the decade which closed with 1874 our death rate was 30.27 per thousand; during the one which closed with 1894 it was 24.07.—Mrs. Schuyler Van Rensselaer, in Century.

An Iron Tree.

A remarkable discovery is narrated by Prof. Carter to the Academy of Science of Philadelphia as being made lately near Three Tans, Montgomery county, Pa. In a sandstone quarry at the place an iron tree has been found embedded in the rock ten feet below the surface. The tree is about 18 feet long and 18 inches in diameter, and has been completely turned to iron, or rather to the iron ore known as brown hematite; and Prof. Carter accounts for the phenomenon by the fact that the shales and the sandstones in the neighborhood are covered with red oxide of iron, and sometimes with brown hematite. It is presumed that the iron ore was reduced in water containing carbonic acid gas; then, as the water holding the iron in solution came in contact with the tree, the iron was precipitated on the latter, and there was no interchange of vegetable and mineral matter, so that the rocks were relieved of their coloring and the tree took it up.—Railway Review.

Conditional.

"Doctor, do you think that a little mince pie, now and then, would hurt me?"

"Not if you can have it in the house without eating any of it."—Detroit Free Press.